

REGION 9 — HUDSON-DELAWARE

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December was generally mild with some warm days and very little snow, most of which fell at the end of the month. January continued the mild trend. The Hudson River was filled with moving ice floes and ponds and lakes were frozen except at leads kept open by the wintering Canada Geese and Mute Swan. American Coot and Ring-necked Duck took advantage of these openings and overwintered in some areas. February brought an early warm spell that took the ice from the river and sent the ducks north early. Ponds began to open and the snow that fell mid month did not stay. What little snow we did have was often followed by rain, which quickly took care of any ground cover. In general the temperature was above average and the precipitation, mostly in the form of rain, was about normal.

The Humpo Marsh in ULST has been watched with great interest for several years. It began as a impoundment made by beaver, who have long since gone. The fate of this swampy pond was unsure as the dam was bound to wash out after a period of time. That is what has finally happened. The water level continued to drop as the dam totally breached. The area has now reverted back to a meandering stream through Purple Loosestrife, cattails and other marsh plants. It will be interesting over the next few years to see what develops in this new habitat. Although we hate to see this interesting and productive area change, it was bound to happen if we let nature take its course. It not only will change the habitat but also the wildlife that live and visit there.

There was no winter finch invasion this year but two interesting visitors were noted. An **Orange-crowned Warbler** appeared at the home of Nancy April in Kripplebush, ULST. It remained at her feeder from late December to mid January, easily seen as it fed at the kitchen window feeder. For a second winter, a **Pine Warbler** turned up at Florence Germond's feeder, Shunpike, DUTC. It stayed through mid January. These two, along with the Yellow-rumped Warber, are the most frequent winter stragglers and occasionally turn up at feeding stations.

Contributors: Fred & Wava Abbott, Frank Brown, Barbara Butler, Jan & Fitz Fitzpatrick, Dot Fleury, Valerie Freer, Thelma Haight, Alice Jones, Susan Joseph, Christine Luchini, Helen Manson, Doris Metraux, Barbara Michelin, Russ O'Malley, Maryanne Pitts, Selden Spencer, John P. Tramontano, Ed Treacy, Marion VanWagner, Otis Waterman, Joe Weise.

Abbreviations: BCBC - John Burroughs Natural History Society CBC 29 Dec; EMBC - Edgar A. Mearns Bird Club; MCBC - Edgar A. Mearns Bird Club CBC 15 Dec; WBC - Ralph T. Waterman Bird Club; WCBC - Ralph T. Waterman Bird Club CBC 22 Dec; SCBC - Sullivan County Audubon Society CBC 22 Dec.

LOONS-DUCKS: Com. Loon: two Norrie Pt 2 Jan, one Sylvan L 4 Jan. Pied-billed Grebe: one Sylvan L 11 Feb (BM). Great Blue Heron: six WCBC, wintered in good numbers. Mute Swan: 26 Cornwall Bay 15 Dec, one Rio Res early Dec, 83 WCBC, more widespread than ever, wherever open water available. Snow Goose: 550 over Bashakill SCBC, small flocks throughout DUTC. Canada Goose: nearly 5000 WCBC, MCBC, wintered in large flocks. Wood Duck: 25+ Bashakill 20 Feb, four Vassar Farm 20 Dec, four Kays Pd 23 Feb (AJ), three Stissing 23 Feb (TH). Am. Black Duck: wintered in good numbers. Mallard: widespread and numerous. N. Pintail: four WCBC, three Pleasant Valley 24 Feb, three Kays Pd 24 Feb, three L Walton and Round Pd, DUTC. Gadwall: ten 1 Dec., seven Wappingers L 7 Dec, two Fishkill 8 Dec (RO). Am. Wigeon: two Bashakill SCBC, a winter first for SULL; two Hillside L 11 Feb, two Craft Pd 27 Feb, two Kays Pd DUTC Feb. Canvasback: 182 MCBC, 400 off Jones Pt ROCK 1 Dec (ET), 2500 Hudson R off Tivoil 22 Feb (SJ). Redhead: pair Brown's Pd, Newburg 15 Jan (ET), rare treat. Ring-necked Duck: 37 Orange Co. CBC, up to 60 all winter Sylvan L., many in inland ponds Feb. Oldsquaw: one Hudson R at Iona I (ET). Black Scoter: 12 MCBC. Com. Goldeneye: five SCBC, 25 Hudson R 7 Feb (MVW), 50 Esopus 27 Feb, few in Hudson R throughout Feb. Bufflehead: 11 L Welsh 19 Jan (DM), three Hudson R 7 Feb, one Kays Pd 23 Feb, eight Esopus 25 Feb, two L Dutchess 31 Dec. Hooded Merganser: five L Carmel 3 Dec, two East Branch Res PUTN 25 Jan (FB), one Stissing 27 Feb. Com. Merganser: 138 MCBC, 20 Rondout Res 19 Dec, large flocks in Hudson R Jan, max 1000 on 10 Dec. Red-breasted Merganser: two MCBC, two Vanderburg Cove 12 Feb (AJO). Ruddy Duck: 50 L Carmel 3 Dec (FB).

HAWKS-ALCIDS: **Black Vulture**: three MCBC, first winter record; four Stony Pt 22 Feb (DM), three feeding on a dead dog, Con Rail tracks ROCK 19 Feb (ET). Turkey Vulture: few wintered, arr mid Feb. Osprey: one Ables Pd 5 Dec (BB), late record DUTC. Bald Eagle: 47 ad, 35 imm DEC aerial survey ULST, SULL, ORAN 15 Jan; two or three observed along Hudson R. DUTC. N. Harrier: low winter numbers but widespread, four around DeBuck Sod Farms, max eight DUTC. Sharp-shinned Hawk: excellent winter numbers, six MCBC, six WCBC. Cooper's Hawk: few singles all period (JOT), one at feeder Carmel through Jan (FB), two BCBC, max six DUTC. Red-shouldered Hawk: one 1-8 Jan (OTW), one Kays Pd 23 Feb (AJ). Red-tailed Hawk: excellent winter population. Rough-legged Hawk: two-three wintered Sod Farms ORAN, scattered reports from e DUTC. Golden Eagle: one wintered Pepacton Res SULL, two Stissing Mt DUTC Feb. Am Kestrel: good numbers wintering ORAN, scarce DUTC, 11 MCBC, five WCBC, three BCBC. Merlin: one Pawling 20 Feb (CL). Ring-necked Pheasant: three BCBC, four WCBC, four SCBC, never plentiful. Ruffed Grouse: four BCBC, two WCBC,

starting to drum mid Feb. Wild Turkey: good numbers throughout Region, 25 outside Middletown all winter (JPT), 30 Cary Arb., Millbrook 9 Feb, 23 WCBC. N. Bobwhite: one Pawling 31 Dec, very scarce. Am Coot: 38 WCBC, max 30 wintered Sylvan L. Virginia Rail: one Pawling 31 Dec. Killdeer: four MCBC, two Travers Marsh 13 Dec (MVW), one Dover Plains 22 Feb. Com. Snipe: two Travers Marsh 13 Dec (MVW), one Pawling 31 Dec. Great Black-backed Gull: 30 Hudson R at Rhinecliff 22 Feb, 15 Napanock 24 Feb.

PIGEONS-WOODPECKERS: E. Screech-Owl: seven WCBC, otherwise scarce. Great Horned Owl: usual ones several areas DUTC, two SCBC. Snowy Owl: two Gardner William Conner, only report. Barred Owl: two SCBC, few noted DUTC. Long-eared Owl: one Fishkill 1 Jan (RO). Short-eared Owl: max six DeBruce Sod Farms ORAN all winter, two Galesville 23 Feb (SS). N. Saw-Whet Owl: one Goose Mt SP 9 Feb (FWA), one found dead Chester Mall 20 Feb (EMBC). Belted Kingfisher: good wintering population. Red-headed Woodpecker: one Bloomingburg 6 Jan, a new locality; ad at feeder N Terrytown 20 Jan to early Mar, well observed close to window from inside the house (Bob Lewis). Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: one MCBC, one Washingtonville Dec EMBC, several DUTC Dec and Jan. N. Flicker: good winter numbers. Pileated Woodpecker: nine WCBC, seven BCBC, good population most areas.

FLYCATCHERS-STARLINGS: Eastern Phoebe: one Bashakill SCBC, indicated mild Dec weather. Horned Lark: flock Haight Hill DUTC 6 Dec, max 250 Greigs Farm, Red Hook, 12 BCBC. Blue Jay: normal winter population. Am Crow: 7000+ Middletown Roost, 1500 WCBC. Fish Crow: three Castle Pt Road 21 Feb (Jean Beck). Com. Raven: scattered singles and pairs SULL, max 14 in a kettle 4 Jan (JW). Red-breasted Nuthatch: good numbers most areas. Brown Creeper: seven SCBC, nine WCBC, two BCBC. Carolina Wren: continues widespread in good numbers. Winter Wren: five MCBC, two WCBC, one SCBC, one Norrie Pt 2 Jan. Golden-crowned Kinglet: 24 WCBC. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: two WCBC, one BCBC. E. Bluebird: 32 BCBC, 49 WCBC., good numbers DUTC. Hermit Thrush: one MCBC, one Beacon 8 Dec. Am Robin: good numbers Dec, fewer Jan and Feb. **Varied Thrush**: one at the home of B & M Edleman Napanock late Nov. through Feb (mob). Gray Catbird: one Fishkill 1 Dec, one Poughkeepsie 16 Dec, one WCBC. Brown Thrasher: one Wawarsing 28-29 Jan. Am. Pipit: one Piermont Pier ROCK 1 Dec (ET). Cedar Waxwing: 30 Vassar Farm 2 Dec, 21 WCBC, few noted Jan and Feb. N. Shrike: one central ORAN (J&FF), one Fishkill 1 Dec (RO).

VIREOS-WARBLEDERS: **Orange-crowned Warbler**: *intro*. Yellow-rumped Warbler: few L Walton and Fishkill Dec, seven MCBC, three WCBC, one to two wintered Pleasant Valley (MVW). **Pine Warbler**: *intro*.

TANAGERS-WEAVERS: Rufous-sided Towhee: one Vanderburg Cove 13 Jan (HM), one Pleasant Valley 23 Jan (MVW). Am. Tree Sparrow: fairly abundant. Chipping Sparrow: seven at two localities SULL 2 Dec. Field Sparrow: five WCBC. Fox Sparrow: one Wawarsing early Dec, one DUTC 4-5 Jan (BM). Song Sparrow: good winter numbers, high MCBC. Swamp Sparrow: nine OCC, three

WCBC, one Cruger I 20 Jan (SJ). White-throated Sparrow: good numbers, many at feeders. Lapland Longspur: two Red Hook 27 Dec (HM), lack of snow made them especially hard to find. Snow Bunting: scattered small groups ORAN, SULL, 25 Greig's Farm, Red Hook 18 Jan (SJ), 13 East Park, T Gilbert 18 Jan. Red-winged Blackbird: some wintered. E. Meadowlark: three in uncut hay field PUTN 29 Jan (FB). Rusty Blackbird: one Wawarsing 17 Jan, max 30 Stissing 11 Dec (TH). Com. Grackle: few wintered, arr 21 Feb. Purple Finch: very few reported, max eight Dover Plains 24 Feb. Com. Redpoll: five Rudd Pd DUTC 13 Dec (DF). only report. Pine Siskin: scarce, 14 SULL (VF). Evening Grosbeak: 50 DeBruce early Dec, at many feeders SULL, 63 White L, very scarce DUTC.

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